

UNIVERSITY OF SURREY
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**PRICE-QUALITY RELATIONSHIP
AT CAR BOOT SALES**

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Submitted in part **fulfilment** of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in Management.

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September 1995

UNIT KOLEKSI KHAS

ABSTRACT

Price is one of the major determinants of buying behaviour and product choice. For some consumers, they perceive the price as an indicator of product quality. The aim of this dissertation is to investigate a part of consumer buying behaviour at car boot sales, focusing on their perception on price and price-quality relationship of the product sold at car boot sales. The research was carried out on consumers of car boot sales in Guildford, Sheffield and Cardiff. The data was collected via questionnaires in which respondents were asked to give their responses based on their shopping experience, including the most commonly item they shop for at car boot sales.

The main findings of this study show that most of the consumers at car boot sales were only buying on price. They viewed price in its negative role and were very concerned for paying lower prices. The lower the price, the more willing they are to buy the item. Because of the product price at car boot sales are mostly very cheap, consumers found that it was very difficult to relate the price to the quality of the product. However, in some cases, they did relate the price to the quality of the product but the relationship was very weak. They also very difficult to agree the old saying 'you get what you pay for' because usually at car boot sales they receive more than what they pay for.

Car boot sales are becoming a big business. More research should be done in this area in order to improve the quality of car boot sales as a whole; as a place for shopping and recycling.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank to my supervisor, Dr. R I Phelps, for his continuous help and advice throughout the preparation of this dissertation. Also, my gratitude to the consumers at car boot sales that agreed to participate in this survey, without whom this work could not have been accomplished.

Thank you to the following people; Hariyati **Sharima**, Anise and Salniza, for their invaluable help in the completion of this dissertation.

Finally, I have dedicated this dissertation to my family, because of their continual love, support and encouragement, not just throughout this last year, but always.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Scope

Today, a million of people are estimated to visit car boot sales every weekend. The growth of car boot sales, in UK, started **from** the early Eighties and becoming popular story in the Nineties. Car boot sales combine two of the most popular British pastimes: shopping and recycling (Nicholson-Lord, 1994). Most people go to car boot sale to buy second-hand goods such as electrical goods, video games and children's toys. Buying second-hand products can make sense; it is cheaper and it recycles goods that might otherwise get thrown away. There are around 1500 boot sales every week, estimates the Association of British Chambers of commerce, involving around **250,000** vehicles (Lacey, 1994). ~~It appears~~ that car boot sales are becoming big business.

There are many reasons for people to shop at car boot sales. One main factor is the price. Second-hand goods are sold at a very cheap price at car boot sales. Cases have been cited in which goods bought cheaply at car boot sales turned out to be very expensive at market price. In 1993, a set of **watercolours** for **50p** at car boot sale, which turned out to be the early works of Belfast artist Andrew **Nicholl** (1804-66) and were worth **£500** (Lisle, 1993). Another example, a woman in Bristol bought a **ten-**

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